Keystone Citizen Advisory Group
Meeting No. 3
Coupeville Recreation Hall
August 26, 2004 - 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Meeting Summary

Note: *This meeting summary represents notes from the Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) meeting, and is not a formal transcript or minutes. It is provided for the information of CAG members and other interested parties.*

AGENDA

I. Opening Remarks
II. Explanation of Harbor Options
III. Vessel/Harbor Options Combinations Matrix
IV. "Out-of-Box" Vessel Discussion; Regulatory Concerns
V. Site-Specific Cost Information Tools
VI. Safety – Current Operational Measures
VII. Review 6/24/04 Meeting Summary
VIII. Next Steps; CAG Meeting Schedule
IX. Public Comment

ATTENDEES

CAG Members
- ✓ Nancy Conard, Coupeville Mayor
- ✓ Forest Shomer, Port Townsend
- ✓ Tim McGuire, WSF Ferry Captain

WSDOT Representative
- ✓ Paula Hammond

Facilitator
- ✓ Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Project Team Members
- ✓ Celia Schorr, WSF
- ✓ Dana Moreland, WSF
- ✓ Russ East, WSF
- ✓ Joy Goldenberg, WSF
- ✓ Laurens Zuidweg, WSF
- ✓ Captain Kelly Mitchell, WSF
- ✓ Ray Deardorf, WSF
- ✓ Tami Neilson, WSF
- ✓ Doug Playter, CH2M Hill
- ✓ Erin Pressentin, EnviroIssues
- ✓ Hadley Greene, EnviroIssues

MEETING HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- Harbor Option Layouts
- Revised CAG Meeting Schedule
- Vessel Diagram
- Public Comments
- Safety Excerpts from Keystone Feasibility Study
- Vessel Details Matrix
- Draft 6/24/04 CAG Meeting Summary

OPENING REMARKS

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues, opened the meeting. She welcomed attendees and recognized Washington State Senator Mary Margaret Haugen. She explained that due to the absence of CAG Member Clark Jennison, and the expected early departure of Nancy Conard, the meeting would be shortened to one and a half hours.

Penny informed the public that had not attended previous meetings that the CAG had provided input to Washington State Ferries (WSF) on vessels to be studied and harbor options.

EXPLANATION OF HARBOR OPTIONS

Dana Moreland, WSF; Doug Playter, CH2M Hill

Dana Moreland, WSF Terminal Engineering, presented eight options for studying Keystone Harbor. Dana informed attendees that maintaining the existing conditions, harbor and terminal configuration will be included as an option in the technical analysis, for a total of nine total options analyzed. These preliminary layouts will be analyzed using the physical harbor model that is under construction at Oregon State University. Dana explained that the intent of presenting the preliminary options is to gather any general layout concerns from the CAG.

Dana indicated that there are some common elements of each option, including:

- Access from the east of the terminal on SR 20
- Signalized intersection to improve access to the terminal
- Estimated holding area size (to be confirmed with traffic modeling)
- Maintained existing connectivity between Keystone Harbor and Crockett Lake
- Ferry slips consisting of a transfer span, towers, wingwalls, and inner and outer dolphins of equal size
- Minimum ¼-mile deceleration distance for safe approach, driving breakwater length

Dana explained that "A" and "B" for each option indicate the difference between a stone rubble mound jetty (A), and a steel pile wall current deflector (B). He discussed the characteristics of each option.

Harbor Options 1A & 1B

Harbor Options 1A and 1B use the existing holding area and general footprint of the current terminal. The use of the existing holding area reduces the need for repaving or adding pavement. However, to bring in a larger boat, there would be an impact to the state parks area due to dredging and constructing an armored slope.

In this option, the jetty is extended to provide the ¼-mile deceleration distance.

Discussion for Harbor Options 1A & 1B

- Are there buildings in the area of the state park that would be impacted?

  This needs to be confirmed. WSF will investigate and coordinate any potential impacts with State Parks.

Harbor Options 2A & 2B

Dana explained that Options 2A and 2B use the existing state park boat launch area to reduce the need for additional paving. The boat launch would be relocated to the opposite side of the harbor in an effort to improve safety.

Because the vessel is at the mouth of the harbor, the harbor and channel would not need to be widened for this option. The jetty is extended to provide protection for the vessel while in the slip, however in this option the vessel is more exposed at the berth than it would be inside the harbor.

Discussion for Harbor Options 2A & 2B

- What is the green dashed line?

  This green line refers to the conservation and dive park area. For this option and some of the others, WSF would be infringing on that area.

Harbor Options 3A & 3B

Options 3A and 3B relocate the holding area to align with the new slip location inside the harbor. Because of the new location, there is less impact on the state park; however, additional impact is made to the harbor's eastern wall. The location within the harbor would also require the harbor channel to be widened. The jetty is extended to provide the ¼-mile safe decelerating distance. In this option, a rubble mound breakwater would infringe slightly on the conservation area.

Discussion for Harbor Options 3A & 3B

- Does this option essentially build a new parking lot?

  Yes. For this option, one alternative would be to reconfigure and locate the holding area further west or within the existing State Park parking lot area.

- Are these options generic in nature? For instance, they do not assume the type of vessel, stopping area, or where the parking lot would be located.

  These are general harbor options. WSF will develop specific scenarios showing how each harbor option will be modified to accommodate each vessel in the study. Each option does assume the ¼-mile deceleration distance.

Harbor Option 4A & 4B

Dana explained Options 4A and 4B. These options use the existing state park camping area for approach and vehicle holding, which would necessitate paving much of the area. Campsites

presently in this area of the state park would need to be relocated. The boat launch currently on the eastern side of the harbor would not be affected. This option does not require widening the harbor channel, as the vessel slip is located at the mouth of the harbor. The jetty is extended for this option to provide protection for the vessel while in the slip. Although the jetty is extended, the vessel is more exposed at the berth than it would be inside the harbor.

Discussion for Harbor Options 4A & 4B

- Does each option assume the 130-class vessels?

  Yes. Each option shows an approximate extent of the "worst case conditions" such as the amount of state park that would be impacted and the extent of channel widening that would be necessary in order to accommodate an Issaquah 130 Class vessel.

- Would this harbor option accommodate one or two vessels?

  This will be defined through the studies of traffic and ridership. It is not assumed for the harbor option layouts.

- What is the impact of vessels on silt movement at the entrance to the harbor?

  WSF will get a better idea of that kind of soil movement once the harbor modeling is completed.

- Will there be any camping area left if this option is chosen?

  This option would not be compatible with the camping area; the two cannot coexist at this specific location. The camping area would have to be relocated if this option were chosen.

General Discussion on Harbor Options

- For any of these scenarios where the vessel is located outside the harbor, would the harbor remain undredged?

  WSF assumes that connectivity to Crockett Lake will be maintained, even if depths do not need to be increased for a new option. We expect that the United States Army Corps of Engineers would continue to perform maintenance dredging as necessary inside the harbor.

- On each of the harbor option layouts, there is a cross section in the upper right corner. What is that?

  The cross section indicates the approximate limits of dredging, slopes and depths needed on either side of the harbor. For instance, for Harbor Options 1A and 1B, we would need to increase the width of the harbor and cut back the slopes on both sides of the harbor.

- It seems you could move the vessel closer to the edge with a shear wall.

  We will investigate and update the layouts with more detail as we progress in our harbor modeling and technical analysis.

- Are each of these options created to do the harbor modeling? Each of these four general options show the general direction of how the vessel would be oriented and the approach needed from offshore.

  Yes. The important thing to note at this time is the location and characteristics of the breakwater.

- What criteria were used to create each option?

  In general, two primary criteria were used—width of the channel and ¼-mile stopping distance. The width of the channel should be between three and five times the vessel width. For these options, the width is 3.6 times, so it is on the lower end of that scale. There is also a ¼-mile minimum stopping distance that must be accounted for.

- For options 2 and 4, it looks like the tide will run along where the vessel is berthed.

  That will need to be studied through the harbor modeling.

- If the jetty is built using the steel piling, could you bring the boat up next to it?

  Yes, the jetty could be designed to have that capability.

VESSEL/HARBOR OPTIONS COMBINATIONS MATRIX

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny Mabie explained a matrix showing the vessels to be studied by WSF in combination with all harbor options (See handout: Vessel Details). These include four vessel types in addition to the Steel Electrics that are currently used on the route:

- "Keystone Specials" (same footprint as the Steel Electrics)
- 100-car or "Growth" Option (*Evergreen State*/*Sealth*)
- Issaquah 130 (existing and new)
- "Out-of-the-Box" Vessel

The matrix depicts the number of vessels needed on the route in order to keep today's capacity.

Penny asked for and received concurrence from the CAG that these were the vessels agreed upon at the June 24, 2004 meeting.

Penny showed a table illustrating harbor option and vessel combinations, or "scenarios." The table shows which options are physically possible according to whether or not each vessel would physically fit into the harbor under existing harbor size and depth conditions. Future studies will be based upon this preliminary analysis. Penny asked the CAG to review the matrix and see if this information made sense.

Discussion

- When this information is combined with the traffic studies, a clear idea of each scenario will be understood.

- What was the exact criteria for this preliminary screening?

  The scenarios were screened using the question: "Under today's existing conditions and harbor size, could this vessel physically fit into the harbor?"

- On the Vessel Details table, does "existing" refer to vessels existing in the entire WSF fleet, not just on the Keystone route?

  Yes. "Out-of-Box" refers to a vessel picked solely because it does not require modifying Keystone Harbor.

"OUT-OF-BOX" VESSEL DISCUSSION; REGULATORY CONCERNS

Laurens Zuidweg, WSF Vessel Engineering

Laurens Zuidweg, WSF Vessel Engineering, explained that his department had hired Glosten Associates to answer two different questions for this route. The first was: "What does it cost to keep the Steel Electric vessels running on this route?" This question will be answered at the next CAG meeting for costs over the next 10, 20, and 30 years.

Second, Glosten was tasked to look at the out-of-box vessel option and see if a double-ended vessel that would fit in the current Keystone Harbor could be purchased anywhere in the United States. Glosten is approaching U.S. ship brokers and ferry systems, as well as the cruise ship industry (as this industry is familiar with existing vessels and additional ship brokers). This research will take an additional one to two weeks and will be presented at the next CAG meeting.

One of the conditions for looking for an out-of-box vessel is that it must be built in the United States. A foreign-built vessel would have to be reflagged, which can be a costly process. Since WSF is in the business of shipping and receiving between United States ports, the agency must comply with the Jones Act governing trade within the United States. If a foreign-built vessel is reflagged, WSF must also go through a second process to apply to the United States Congress for permission to use a foreign-built vessel to operate between two domestic ports. As this is a costly process and permission is not guaranteed, the out-of-box search is limited in scope to vessels built in the United States.

Laurens explained regulatory concerns for the Steel Electric vessels. Currently, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) has issued Certificates of Inspection for all WSF vessels, including the Steel Electrics, however these can be withdrawn at USCG discretion. The Certificates of Inspection are based on whether vessels comply with current regulations. The Steel Electrics are currently "grandfathered" for use on the Keystone-Port Townsend route.

Grandfathering, in this case, refers to exceptions to current rules and regulations granted by the USCG. When vessels are built, they must comply with whatever regulations are in effect at the time the vessel keel is laid. As regulations are changed and strengthened over time, vessels that are already in operation are generally "grandfathered," meaning they do not have to meet the newer regulations. When minor updates to existing (grandfathered) vessels are made, the USCG does not generally require the grandfathered vessel to meet the newer requirements. However, if a vessel is being substantially overhauled with the intent to prolong the lifecycle, then the USCG

is likely to require the overhaul to include updates that would make the vessel meet all current rules and regulations – in other words, the vessel would lose its "grandfathered" status.

The Steel Electric vessels on the Keystone-Port Townsend route are now at the end of their lifecycle and will require a major overhaul in the next 10 years. Laurens remarked that in his opinion, at this point, it is more efficient to build new vessels than to overhaul the Steel Electrics due to costs that would be incurred to bring the Steel Electrics in line with current rules and regulations.

Discussion

- Is it true that in the mid-1980s, the Steel Electrics were overhauled and completely rebuilt except for the hulls?

  That overhaul would have been done at the half-way point of the lifecycle, not the end of the lifecycle, which does not mandate bringing the Steel Electrics up to new USCG rules and regulations.

- Do you know if the local Whidbey Island vessel brokers, Nichols Brothers, were contacted for the out-of-box vessel study?

  WSF will ask Glosten Associates and respond to the question at the next meeting.

SITE-SPECIFIC COST INFORMATION TOOLS

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny Mabie, explained some of the types of site-specific costs that contribute to WSF's cost analysis and decision-making. She showed two cost analysis matrices that will help WSF compile and analyze site-specific costs. These costs are distinct from system-wide costs, or the impact to the entire WSF system.

Vessel operational costs include deck labor, fuel, and other items related to operating the vessel. Ray Deardorf, WSF Planning, explained that deck labor costs include workers who are above deck, including the car deck and pilot deck. Non-labor supplies include costs such as oil or toilet paper, and engine labor refers to the engineering crews that operate the vessel below deck. These crews are on board 24 hours a day.

Penny showed a second cost matrix that will help WSF analyze each harbor-vessel scenario. In this spreadsheet, operational, capital, and maintenance costs are captured and added together to show overall costs for each scenario.

Discussion

- It would be helpful to see the anticipated schedule based on the current capacity and ridership levels for each vessel. For example, a 130-car vessel is every 1.5 hours, but a "Keystone Special" is every 45 minutes.

  Do you mean a capacity and frequency comparison?

Yes, this would help anticipate the down-the-road impacts.

- Can we see annualized operational costs rather than daily costs?

  Yes.

- Can we identify off-site cost considerations such as traffic signalization?

  Those costs would be under capital costs on the site-specific cost chart.

- It would be nice to see definitions of each item in the spreadsheet, such as capital vs. maintenance vs. operational costs.

  WSF will show what is included under operations, maintenance and capital costs.

- Would it be possible to see the trickle-down effects of taking one vessel off another route to use on the Keystone-Port Townsend route? For example, if a boat is pulled from another route, what are the costs to that route?

  Yes, that will be included in the system costs analysis.

  It would be nice to see those trickle-down effects stated in words.

Conclusion

WSF will include the following information in its analysis:

- **Vessel capacity and frequency analysis**
- **Annualized operational costs**
- **Definitions of capital, maintenance, and operational costs**
- **Trickle-down effects of using alternate vessels currently in the WSF system**

SAFETY

Captain Kelly Mitchell, WSF

Captain Kelly Mitchell, WSF Senior Port Captain, presented safety issues on the Keystone route. Captain Mitchell described his background as an Ocean Master since 1977, sailing on fishing boats to vessels over 1,000-feet in length. He also has 14 years management experience in the Alaskan Marine Highway Ferry System, the second largest fleet in the United States. Captain Mitchell is currently the Senior Port Captain for WSF, and one of his responsibilities is ensuring safe vessel operations throughout the entire WSF fleet.

Captain Mitchell described the challenges of landing in Keystone Harbor. He indicated that the largest safety issues relate to entering the harbor entrance during strong ebb currents and adverse weather conditions.

Prior to the 2002 grounding, no formal safety procedures governed captains' decisions on entering the harbor on the Keystone route. Captains were allowed to make a professional decision whether or not to delay sailings or enter the harbor during higher current velocities or when reduced visibility due to fog conditions existed. This placed great pressure on captains as

ferry riders and customers expect to make it to their destination without delay. Following the grounding of 2002, Captain Mitchell worked with the Keystone ferry captains to create parameters for whether or not to enter Keystone Harbor. These guidelines were formalized in 2003 and now take those elements of the decision-making process away from the captains.

Captain Mitchell explained that as a result of these policy guidelines, there have been increased cancellations on this route. Captains are instructed that if the end of the entrance breakwater is not visible from a distance of ¼-mile outside the breakwater, masters must stop their approach to the entrance and turn around to reassess the visibility conditions. If the visibility maintains less than the ¼-mile criteria, they are to return to Port Townsend. Another guideline instructs that if a 3.5-knot current is in place, ferries may not enter the harbor ½-hour before or after the time of maximum ebb current.

Discussion

- How many cancelled sailings are there each year?

  Approximately 100 sailings were cancelled in 2003.

- Were there 980 cancellations in August?

  I think you are referring to schedule changes in 2000 that were due to budget cuts.

- There have been approximately six cancellations this summer due to fog when we turned around and came back or did not sail.

REVIEW OF 6/24/04 CAG MEETING SUMMARY; ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Penny Mabie, EnviroIssues

Penny Mabie explained some of the additional handouts given to the CAG and public at the meeting. The safety handout includes information referring to safety and operations from the Keystone Harbor Feasibility Study published in August 2003. The public comment handout compiles all public comments submitted to WSF and the Keystone CAG either by letter or email for the CAG's consideration. The Revised CAG Schedule shows upcoming CAG meetings and communications with the Washington State Transportation Commission.[1]

Next, Penny asked if any CAG members had any revisions to the June 24, 2004 CAG Meeting Summary. No edits were made.

Penny discussed the possibility of a CAG ferry ride/tour in the ferry wheelhouse on the Keystone route. This tour will be coordinated with the next CAG meeting. WSF will work with the CAG to schedule this prior to the next meeting.

Discussion

[1] *Note*: The Washington State Transportation Commission governs the Washington State Department of Transportation. It is a different entity than the Legislative Transportation Commission, to whom the final Keystone Harbor Study will be addressed on December 1, 2004.

- Has someone answered all public comments and questions?

  Joy Goldenberg, WSF Corporate Communications, indicated all comments had received a response.

- Could the CAG see these responses?

  Yes.

- Is the October 13th CAG meeting a change?

  Yes. Please let us know as soon as possible if you have any conflicts.

- I would like to see any costs associated with homeland security regulations called out in the cost analysis.

Conclusion:

- **No changes will be made to the June 24, 2004 CAG Meeting Summary; it will be finalized and posted on the Keystone website.**
- **All WSF answers to the public comments will be given to the CAG at the October 13th meeting.**
- **Dates and arrangements for a ferry tour on the Keystone route will be coordinated with the CAG.**
- **Costs incurred due to homeland security regulations will be indicated in cost analysis.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Penny Mabie reminded all those who wanted to speak during the public comment period to sign up on the sign-in sheet. Based on the number signed in, each person would be allotted an amount of time during the 15-minute period. She reminded the public that this was a chance to offer comments to the CAG, not a question and answer session. It was determined that four minutes would be offered to each public speaker.

Public Comment #1: Will Jones

I can't really get through all that I have to present in four minutes, so I will hit the high points. I think what WSF ought to be looking at is providing facilities with acceptable service 20 years from now, rather than right now and five to six years out, so that service can grow into the 20-year capacity. I tried to analyze this.

I made several assumptions:

- Dredging reduces groundings by 50%
- Dredging reduces schedule cancellations by 10%
- Ridership increases by 1.6% per year
- Operational cost inflation is 3% per year
- Groundings are proportional to the number of dockings and size of ferry

- The pattern of running more ferries in the summer and less in the winter continues
- The number of ferries starts at the current ridership level and builds up to the 20 year level
- Ferry cost: 130 cars = $71.25 million; 100 car = $64 million; 65 cars = $53 million; and 45 cars = $50 million

It turns out, based on my study, that you should have five vessels in the year 2020 to carry 5,000 on the route, and you cannot do that without two docks at either end, so that is probably not feasible in terms of growth. The first size at which growth is accommodated over 20 years is the 100-car ferry. The best size ferry is the 130-car vessel because it meets 20-year growth with just two ferries. I hope you will consider building in a growth factor into the facilities and docks in your calculations.

Public Comment #2: Al Bowers

I don't really have any comment to make but I do have a question. Are these the final four scenarios?

There are actually nine scenarios, the eight presented, plus the existing conditions, which would preserve the terminal as it is.

Isn't the rubble wall on the east side? It seems wrong with the Southerly wind, as the prevailing current flows from the SW to NE there. Is the wingwall on the wrong side?

The prevailing current is from right to left (facing onshore), east to west, 85% of the time.

Public Comment #3: Daniel Thompson

My name is Dan Thompson, and I have been involved from the beginning of this process. I am a maritime lawyer from Seattle with property in Keystone, and my in-laws are from Port Townsend. I also wrote letters to Forest and Nancy. We won our fight, which was to keep the study in the harbor, with Senator Mary Margaret Haugen.

I am concerned that the driving force behind WSF is the 130-class ferry. I think it will kill Port Townsend and Coupeville because you will have restaurants that are either packed or empty at any given time. It means nothing to me, I live on Mercer Island, but if you look at it in terms of schedule, you kill these tourist towns.

Legally, upland parking is what will kill any option. You can't pave the shore, so where do you park? It is environmentally impossible.

Right now we have a 45-minute schedule in a tourist city. Now, maybe a new 100-class ferry will work, that's fine, but my big thing is that you need a ferry running fairly often, not every 1.5 hours. The reality is that it is dead in the winter, crowded in the summer in these towns. That is my number one concern.

My second concern is where to put the parking. Will it go all the way to the [Camp Casey] pool, the tavern [on the Port Townsend side]? I don't think the 130-class vessels are good for either of these two towns.

Public Comment #4: Robin Adams

I think the last speaker put this in a nutshell. This decision is driven by the 130-class, which increases capacity in the winter when it is not needed, but does not increase capacity in the summer when this area does need it. The truth is, there has not been any growth to speak of in the last eight years on this run. In fact, it is –1.0% in the last five years. The ferry size is based on trends in the whole system and is related to the business of standardizing all ferries in the system. I sent my analysis to Nancy Conard. The entire system really needs capacity for six ferries of around 65 cars each. You would have 50% growth in your market, and would improve frequency.

I have a document of my analysis to leave with you. [See "Does the Ferry System Really Need a New Keystone Dock? An Economic Analysis," by Robin G. Adams.]

Public Comment #5: Ria Holbrook

I travel weekly over to Port Townsend, and I do it in the winter. But it would be great to go every 45 minutes in the winter. I know a lot of people, with low tide cancellations, have to wait three hours. For me, the 65-car ferry would be the best option. I would really love it.

Public Comment #6:

I'm wondering if there has been any interest in reactivating the Camano Island to Whidbey Island ferry?

Penny Mabie indicated that following the meeting WSF could individually answer this question.

Public Comment #7: Robert Brotherson

I worked in marine maintenance for many years. I cannot understand why you would not standardize the fleet. I made a lot of money in overtime due to the non-standardization, especially on holiday weekends, however it is shortsighted to not standardize because you have to keep things running all the time, and that costs money. You have to change old systems. You have to ask the question: how will you interchange the boats when you need them?

Another thing is, I think you should look at the hydrofoil vessels they have on the Baltic Sea. You can run them against a steel peg, move cars on and off, it's the most impressive system I have seen.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 P.M.